THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Ministry of Tourism has been implementing a scheme "Market Research Professional Services" under which tourism related surveys, studies, market research, etc. are sponsored. The budget allocation for this scheme for financial year 2007-08 is Rs. 5 crore.

(c) to (e) During the year 2004, M/s. Datamation Consultants Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi was commissioned to conduct a Survey on Collection of Domestic Tourism Statistics for the State of Goa at a total cost of Rs. 11.64 lakh.

Visa-on-Arrival Scheme

1217. SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether her Ministry has asked the Ministry of Home Affairs to get the proposal regarding 'Visa-on-Arrival' be cleared;

(b) if so, the response of the Ministry of Home Affairs in this regard;

(c) whether the foreign tourists have been urging Government to introduce the Visa-on-Arrival Scheme; and

(d) by when the Visa-on-Arrival Scheme is likely to be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. At present, the Ministry of Home Affairs has not agreed to this scheme due to the prevalent security scenario.

(d) Does not arise.

Threat of terrorism to tourist inflow

1218. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there are many cancellations by operators bringing tourists to India due to threat of terrorism and other factors during the current year *i.e.* 2007-08; and

(b) if so, the details thereof State-wise particularly for Rajasthan, Kerala, Goa etc.?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) In 2007, an estimated 5.00 million tourists visited India and showed a growth of 12.4% over the last year. The foreign tourist arrivals for the month of January and February, 2008 has shown an increase of 9.9% and 12.4% respectively over the same period of 2007.

(b) Does not arise.

Safety of tourists

†1219. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA:
SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:
SHRI BHAGWATI SINGH:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase recently in the incidents of teasing and looting with the foreign tourists;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(b) whether it is also a fact that the tourists are not safe even in the metropolitan cities like Mumbai, Delhi and other tourist places like Kochi and Goa;

(c) if so, whether Government has formulated any action plan for safety of the tourists and tourist places; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (d) There have been reports in the media highlighting cases of harassment and misbehaviour with tourists in India. "Public Order' and 'Police' are State subject as per the Seventh Schedule to the Constitution of India and as such registration, investigation, detection and prevention of crime is primarily the responsibility of the State Government including cases relating to crime against tourists. The Ministry of Tourism discussed the issue of safety and security of tourists, amongst other issues, with Secretaries of Tourism of States/Union Territories, the Ministry of Home Affairs and Ministry of Defence. During this meeting the feasibility of deploying the ex-servicemen as Tourist Wardens in States and Union Territories was also discussed. It was emphasized that ensuring the safety and security of tourists is of paramount importance and State Governments/Union Territories must ensure the same.

Potential of tourism in Orissa

1220. SHRI B.J. PANDA:
MS. PRAMILA BOHIDAR:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that Orissa has a vast potential in tourism sector;

(b) whether Government is also aware that lack of infrastructure in this region, is the major hurdle in development of this sector; and

(c) if so, what is the action plan of Government to help the cash-strapped Orissa both financially and physically to exploit this potential to improve its economy?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir.

The development and promotion of tourism is primarily undertaken by the State Governments/Union Territories themselves. However, the Ministry of Tourism provides funds on the basis of project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories for grant of central financial assistance every year under the following schemes:

(i) Product/Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits

(ii) Large Revenue Generating projects

(iii) Fairs and festivals/Events

(iv) Information Technology

Project proposals received from the State Governments/Union Territories that are complete in all respect are examined as per scheme guidelines and approved on the basis of inter-se priority and funds released subject to availability under respective head.